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4 December 1962

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NSC Declassification/Release Instructions on File

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Guidance for Planning Photographic Reconnaissance of Cuba

1. The United States Government has a high priority continuing need for evidence on:

- a. the existence of any kind of offensive weapons system in Cuba capable of attacking targets in the United States;
- b. the general order of magnitude and deployment of Soviet military units and installations in Cuba;
- c. military concentrations in the Guantanamo area.

2. In meeting these requirements, it should be understood that the main objective is to have timely warning of any substantial change in the situation, especially the appearance of offensive weapons in militarily significant numbers. In addition, we need to have adequate information on the Soviet military presence in Cuba as a major element in the political situation in the Caribbean.

3. Missions undertaken to insure the satisfaction of the needs described above will, it is hoped, also provide information on the general situation in Cuba — political, military and economic — including the technical characteristics of Soviet weapons deployed in Cuba, but no additional risk should be run for these purposes.

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4. The United States Government is prepared to use both low-level and high-level reconnaissance, but where practicable necessary intelligence should be obtained by a regular schedule of high-level flights, with low-level missions called for on the basis of specific indications of a target of special interest that cannot be adequately covered by high-level photography or other methods.

5. The Executive Committee would like to have an estimate of the adequacy of such a system of intelligence collection and a plan to meet the criteria set forth above, on the assumption that it is supplemented by energetic collection of information by all other available means.

McGeorge Bundy
Special Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

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